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ATLAS DIALOGUE

THE CIA AND THE PRESS

Foreign reaction to disclosures of media manipulation

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The following exclusive "Atlas Dialogue" was conducted by the Editor in Washington, D.C., with Ruy Barbosa, correspondent for the independent "O Estado de São Paulo" of Brazil; Patrick Brogan, chief Washington correspondent for the independent "Times" of London; and Creighton Burns, Washington correspondent for the independent "Age" of Melbourne, Australia.

How have your countries reacted to revelations of attempted CIA manipulations of the foreign press?

BARBOSA: In Brazil there was quite an uproar. A whole New York Times series on the subject was reprinted, and many editorials repeated what we have always heard—that the CIA runs our country, that we are at the mercy of the U.S. intelligence, all of which I personally think is an exaggeration.

CIA intervention worries a lot of Latin American publishers, editors, and reporters. The recent allegations that the CIA has successfully infiltrated the Inter-American Press Association is causing concern. The Association has a fine record and has helped to free many newsmen jailed by totalitarian governments. Many good people are active in it and they do not want to be part of a government operation. These people are journalists.

BURNS: In Australia we have just been through a minor imbroglio over allegations, denied in Canberra and Washington, that the CIA was involved in activities beyond its charter in

Australia in the Sixties. Australians have pretty much accepted that CIA activity isn't restricted to enemy or unfriendly countries, that it also operates in the territory of allies, particularly those like Australia that have American military establishments. So the recent revelations about the CIA and the press have been received with philosophical resignation.

I wrote a story for my paper about a former Australian journalist who resigned as Editor of *Business International* because its management acknowledged, after a *New York Times* report, that it had indeed provided cover for CIA agents during the 1960s. But on the whole the *Times* series was not given much prominence in Australia.

BROGAN: The public outcry in Britain hasn't been terribly noisy, but newspapers do think the CIA should stop trying to hire Reuters correspondents. This has been said in leaders—editorials—but in a rather convoluted way, because to say the CIA should stop employing or giving retainers to British foreign correspondents would imply that this does indeed happen. This would be an admission no paper is going to make.

Has your country's press been victimized by stories planted by the CIA?

BARBOSA: I can't speak for other publications, but *O Estado* is very careful not to accept any stories that may have links with foreign officials. The USIS-USIA operation is quite large in

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